

U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

HEARING

Subcommittee on Energy and Environment

NOAA's FY 2008 Budget Proposal

March 22, 2007

Statement of Subcommittee on Energy & Environment Ranking Member Bob Inglis (SC-4)

Good afternoon. Thank you, Chairman Lampson, for holding this hearing about the President's Fiscal Year 2008 request for the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

Outside this committee, we don't *hear* much about NOAA, but that's not because NOAA isn't *doing* much. The services NOAA provides have broad applications and impacts, and it's vital that these services have the resources necessary to continue to do the best job possible.

Take the National Weather Service for example. This arm of NOAA provides vital services that our citizens and economy depend on every day. One of those citizens and businessmen is my brother, who operates a shrimping boat in Bluffton, South Carolina. The timely and accurate forecasts and warnings provided by the Weather Service enable my brother to profit from the best weather, and avoid the worst. It's vital that this, and other services, have the resources necessary to continue to do the best job possible.

NOAA also provides important information and services for coastal communities. While I recognize that many in the ocean community would like to see an even larger budget for NOAA, I want to give Admiral Lautenbacher credit for the new initiatives in the FY 2008 budget request that reflect priorities in the President's Ocean Action Plan. At a time when many agencies face flat or declining budgets, he convinced the powers that be to invest \$123 million in programs that will improve our understanding and stewardship of coastal and ocean resources. We should not overlook his good work on that issue.

I thank our witnesses for being here today and look forward to learning more details about NOAA's proposed FY2008 budget.

I yield back the balance of my time.